

Town Council Meeting: 11 July 2005



Town of Garrett Park
PO Box 84
4600 Waverly Avenue
Garrett Park, MD 20896

Regular Meeting of Town Council
Garrett Park Town Hall
10814 Kenilworth Avenue
Garrett Park, MD 20896

Minutes

Call to Order: Mayor Shawaker called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. Present were Councilmembers Altar, Benjamin, Bennett, Soltan, and Wegner. Also present were Town Administrator Pratt, Kay Kaufman of the *Gazette*, Margaret Soltan of the *Bugle*, Garrett Park Citizens Association Co-Presidents Gene Brantley and Jack Mandel, Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) Chair Bob Reinhardt, Montgomery County Council Member Nancy Floreen, and a number of Town residents.

Approval of Agenda: Mayor Shawaker asked that creation of a fund to receive donations towards the Seferlis Memorial be added to the agenda under Action/Discussion. The modified agenda was approved without objection.

Presentations by Citizens:

- Gene Brantley updated the Council on Citizens Association events through the summer.
- Jack Mandel updated the Council on Film Society screenings.
- Jack Mandel also reported on the status of the Penn Place Plaza Brick Project, telling the Council he expected to have all bids in by next week. He was meeting with two more masons and would then make a decision.

Mayor's Report:

- Mayor Shawaker reported on the MML Annual Convention held in Ocean City June 25-28, noting that Councilmembers Altar and Soltan had joined her in attending part or all of the event.
- The Mayor reported on Lt. Governor Steele's upcoming visit to the Town on Friday, July 15th at 9:00 a.m.
- The Mayor Announced she had appointed Gene Brantley and Phillip Schulp to the Maintenance Facility Committee and Norman Robertson to the Right-of-Way Committee.

Councilmember's Reports:

- Councilmember Wegner updated the Council on the status of the Strathmore Avenue project. There was outstanding work to be done in completing the crosswalks at Kenilworth and Keswick, a bus stop pad was missing, the Knowles Ave sidewalk and driveway aprons had to be elevated.

- Councilmember Wegner also reported that he was continuing to have masons look at the retaining walls on Strathmore and had received another estimate for the installation of natural stone veneer.

Approval of Minutes:

Council Meeting on 06/13/05

Special Council Meeting on 06/29/05

Councilmember Benjamin **MOVED**

That both sets of minutes be approved as distributed. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Wegner and **PASSED** unanimously

Action/Discussion:

- Garrett Park Overlay District Amendment – Historic Preservation Committee Chair Bob Reinhardt updated the Council on the proposed amendments to the overlay district. The HPC expected to receive some draft language from the Montgomery County Planning Board staff for review by the committee. Mr. Reinhardt indicated that a citizens association meeting was planned on August 31st to discuss these issues, that the HPC expected to meet with the Council at the September Council meeting to discuss a draft of the proposed amendment, and that there would be another Citizens Association meeting on September 28th and then the Council would probably be asked to decide whether or not to proceed at its October 10th meeting. County Councilmember Nancy Floreen offered her further assistance in working with the County planning staff. There was extended discussion. It was the sense of the Council that no action would be taken by the Council until there had been adequate opportunity for resident review and comment of this important matter. Citizens Association Co-President Brantley reminded everyone of the Association meetings in August and September that would provide opportunity for public discussion and input.
- Ratification of Appointment of Christopher Keller to Historic Preservation Committee – This item was withdrawn.
- Appointment of Auditor – Councilmember Benjamin briefed the Council on the process used to select a new auditor. He noted that the Town's previous auditor had declined to seek a new three-year contract. He further noted that the Town had received 2 bids, and that based on his review of work performed with other municipalities Lindsey and Associates had both a better record and more experience with municipal governments. Mayor Shawaker concurred, noting that she had spoken with numerous officials from Towns that retained Lindsey at the recent MML conference and had heard only positive remarks.
Councilmember Benjamin **MOVED**
That Lindsey and Associates be retained as the Town's auditors and that the Town Administrator be authorized to sign the agreement.
Councilmember Wegner seconded the motion, which **PASSED** unanimously.
- Speed Limit Ordinance – Councilmember Altar updated the Council on progress towards introducing an ordinance to lower the Town speed limit to 19 miles per hour. Councilmembers requested that before any action the issue of potential inability to enforce infractions be investigated and cleared

up. It was also requested that the number of new signs and the costs associated with any change be determined.

- Strathmore Avenue Update – Councilmember Wegner updated the Council on efforts to resolve issues with the SHA regarding the Strathmore Ave. landscaping. He also reported that he was working with Scott Watson, the Town's lighting consultant, and SHA regarding the problems with the street lights having the wrong bulbs and lenses, and has asked SHA that the lights not be illuminated until the proper materials have been installed.
- Seferlis Memorial Fund – Mayor Shawaker asked Council approval for the establishing of a restricted fund within existing Town funds for the purpose of receiving donations to pay for the installation of a stone carving made by recently deceased Constantine Seferlis.

Councilmember Benjamin **MOVED**

That the Clerk-Treasurer be authorized to establish a restricted fund within the Town's accounts for the purpose of receiving donations to pay for the installation of a stone carving made by recently deceased Constantine Seferlis. Councilmember Altar seconded the motion, which **PASSED** unanimously.

Information:

There was none.

Town Administrator Report:

- FY 2005 Budget – Preliminary Report – Town Administrator Pratt reported on the status of the FY 2005 budget. He indicated that the adjustments to the budget at the June 29th meeting appeared to have dealt with most outstanding issues, but until the new auditors had had an opportunity to review the Town's accounts, he was unable to present final figures.
- Long Term Disability Insurance – Town Administrator Pratt informed the Council that he had been discussing employee long-term disability insurance with the Town's insurance agent and with Town staff. The staff would like to have a group established under Maryland law so that they could receive this coverage, which would be fully paid for out of payroll deductions, the Town bearing no expense. It was the sense of the Council that since no Town expense was involved there was no need for a formal vote and that without objection the Town Administrator was authorized to proceed to set up such insurance for Town staff.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

[TOWN SEAL]

Edwin Pratt, Jr.
Clerk-Treasurer